

I/WE CLAIM

1. A cooking appliance comprising:
 - an oven cavity including top, bottom, rear and opposing side walls, as well as an open frontal opening;
 - a door mounted for movement relative to the oven cavity, said door being adapted to selectively extend across the frontal opening or enable access to the oven cavity;
 - a magnetron positioned to direct a microwave energy field into the oven cavity to perform a cooking operation;
 - a control panel including a plurality of control elements for establishing the cooking operation in the oven cavity; and
 - an airflow system for establishing an airflow for the cooking appliance including:
 - an intake portion for introducing an ambient airflow into the cooking appliance, said ambient airflow establishing a first airstream directed into the oven cavity and a second airstream directed outside the oven cavity;
 - an exhaust portion for enabling the first and second airstreams to exit the cooking appliance; and
 - a diverter member guiding the second airstream to mix with the first airstream, prior to the exhaust portion, at a predetermined region outside the oven cavity, wherein moisture carried by the first airstream is carried out through the exhaust portion and away from the cooking appliance.
2. The cooking appliance according to claim 1, wherein the diverter member extends substantially fore-to-aft below the oven cavity.

3. The cooking appliance according to claim 2, wherein said diverter member includes a first end portion positioned at a front section of the cooking appliance, a second end portion arranged at a rear section of the cooking appliance, and an intermediate portion interconnecting the first and second end portions.

4. The cooking appliance according to claim 3, further comprising: at least one opening formed in the first end portion of the diverter member for passage of the second airstream through the diverter member.

5. The cooking appliance according to claim 4, wherein the at least one opening is constituted by a plurality of round openings.

6. The cooking appliance according to claim 4, wherein the at least one opening is constituted by a plurality of louvers.

7. The cooking appliance according to claim 4, wherein the second airstream is guided through the at least one opening prior to mixing with the first airstream.

8. The cooking appliance according to claim 4, wherein the first end portion of the diverter member is angled with respect to at least the second end portion.

9. The cooking appliance according to claim 1, further comprising:
a turntable located in the oven cavity; and
a motor mounted below the oven cavity for rotating the turntable,
said second airstream flowing across the motor.

10. The cooking appliance according to claim 1, further comprising: a second oven cavity located below said oven cavity, said control panel being located vertically between the oven cavity and said second oven cavity, wherein the moisture is directed away from the control panel.

11. The cooking appliance according to claim 1, wherein the predetermined region is located at a front corner portion of the cooking appliance.

12. A cooking appliance comprising:

- an oven cavity including top, bottom, rear and opposing side walls, as well as an open frontal opening;

- a door mounted for movement relative to the oven cavity, said door being adapted to selectively extend across the frontal opening or enable access to the oven cavity;

- a magnetron positioned to direct a microwave energy field into the oven cavity to perform a cooking operation;

- a control panel including a plurality of control elements for establishing the cooking operation in the oven cavity; and

- an airflow system for establishing an airflow for the cooking appliance including:

- an intake portion for introducing an ambient airflow into the cooking appliance, said ambient airflow establishing a first airstream directed into the oven cavity and a second airstream directed outside the oven cavity;

- an exhaust portion for enabling the first and second airstreams to exit the cooking appliance; and

means for guiding the second airstream to mix with the first airstream, prior to the exhaust portion, at a predetermined region outside the oven cavity, wherein moisture carried by the first airstream is carried out through the exhaust portion and away from the cooking appliance.

13. The cooking appliance according to claim 12, wherein the diverter means extends substantially fore-to-aft below the oven cavity.

14. The cooking appliance according to claim 13, wherein said diverter means includes a first end portion positioned at a front section of the cooking appliance, a second end portion arranged at a rear section of the cooking appliance, and an intermediate portion interconnecting the first and second end portions.

15. The cooking appliance according to claim 14, further comprising: at least one opening formed in the first end portion of the diverter means for passage of the second airstream through the diverter means.

16. The cooking appliance according to claim 15, wherein the at least one opening is constituted by a plurality of round openings.

17. The cooking appliance according to claim 15, wherein the at least one opening is constituted by a plurality of louvers.

18. The cooking appliance according to claim 15, wherein the second airstream is guided through the at least one opening prior to mixing with the first airstream.

19. The cooking appliance according to claim 15, wherein the first end portion of the diverter means is angled with respect to at least the second end portion.
20. The cooking appliance according to claim 12, further comprising:
a turntable located in the oven cavity; and
a motor mounted below the oven cavity for rotating the turntable, said second airstream flowing across the motor.
21. The cooking appliance according to claim 12, further comprising:
a second oven cavity located below said oven cavity, said control panel being located vertically between the oven cavity and said second oven cavity, wherein the moisture is directed away from the control panel.
22. The cooking appliance according to claim 12, wherein the predetermined region is located at a front corner portion of the cooking appliance.
23. A method of removing moisture developed during a cooking operation of a food item in an oven cavity of a microwave cooking appliance comprising:
introducing an airflow into the cooking appliance during the cooking operation;
introducing microwave energy into the oven cavity to cook the food item;
directing a first portion of the airflow into the oven cavity;
directing a second portion of the airflow outside the oven cavity;

guiding the first portion of the airflow from the oven cavity to outside the oven cavity, with said first portion including moisture developed in the oven cavity during the cooking operation;

leading the second portion of the airflow through a diverter member to mix with the first portion of the airflow at a predetermined region outside the oven cavity; and

exhausting the first and second portions of the airflow away from the cooking appliance, wherein the moisture carried by the first portion of the airflow is carried away from the cooking appliance.

24. The method of claim 23, further comprising: mixing the first and second portions of the airflow below a level of the oven cavity.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the second portion of the airflow is lead through a plurality of round openings provided in the diverter member.

26. The method of claim 24, wherein the second portion of the airflow is lead through a plurality of louvers provided in the diverter member.

27. The method of claim 23, further comprising:
rotating a turntable located in the oven cavity through a motor mounted below the oven cavity; and
directing the second portion of the airflow across the motor.

28. The method of claim 23, further comprising: causing the first and second portions of the airflow to mix at a front corner portion of the cooking appliance.